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ABSTRACT

The Beginning Teacher Induction Program (BTIP) began in 1993 for all Anglophone school districts in New Brunswick (Canada). The goals were to improve the teaching performance of new teachers, lower their attrition rate, and improve the system of collegial support within schools. Questionnaires were developed to gather data from the participants in the 1995-96 program--156 beginning teachers (76 responses), 147 mentors (63 responses), 96 principals (52 responses), and 12 district contact persons (12 responses). The greatest amount of induction activity occurred at the local school level. The most frequent activities were meetings with mentors to discuss educational issues, visits to other schools, inservice workshops, professional development sessions, and individual preparation or unit planning. Problems included a lack of time, unclear expectations of the BTIP program, lack of proximity to partners classrooms, assigning mentors to beginning teachers with a different subject or grade assignment, and infrequent classroom observation by beginning teachers. Generally participants believed BTIP was a worthwhile program that did improve the quality of professional life for both beginning teachers and their mentors. Tables are included. (Contains 23 references.) (JLS)

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PFD's for Beginning Teachers:
A Report on the Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick

Recently as I assisted visitors from Alberta into their PFD's prior to a canoe trip on the river behind our house, it occurred to me that these personal flotation devices perform functions which are metaphorically similar to those of mentors in the beginning teacher induction program with which I have been associated for several years. If paddlers get into difficulties and a canoe overturns, they can rely on their PFD's to keep them afloat until other canoeists in the group can come to their assistance.

The difficulties faced by beginning teachers have been well documented in the literature (Ryan, 1974, 1992; Huling-Austin, 1986; Everett-Turner, 1985; Veenman, 1984). Indelible memories of my own first year of teaching remain after nearly 30 years. These memories, combined with my continuing association with beginning teachers, led me to conclude that in most jurisdictions, first-year teachers are still left alone to face what Lortie (1975), in his sociological study of teachers, described as a "sink-or-swim" situation. Why do most educational leaders continue to permit beginning teachers to move from university classrooms to public school classrooms without providing organized ongoing support during the initial year?

While acknowledging the value of student teaching practica, I submit that, for many beginning teachers, additional and continuing support at least during the first year, is necessary. The professional literature (APEC, 1997; Ganser,1996; Wilkin,1992; Gordon, 1991) provides ample evidence that induction programs which pair beginning teachers with experienced ones will not only improve the first-year experience for new teachers, but also add a significant professional development component for both participants.

My 3-year involvement with a teacher induction program in New Brunswick has convinced me that school districts can provide the necessary professional advice and encouragement novice teachers need with relatively little effort and cost. Although a teacher induction program is not a new concept, perhaps this is an appropriate time to re-visit this idea as large numbers of aging teachers prepare to retire and equally large numbers of inexperienced ones wait to replace them.

This article describes the first year of a beginning teacher induction program following two years of a pilot project in the anglophone districts of New Brunswick. The details should be of interest to teacher educators and to both administrators and teachers in the public school system.

Background to the BTIP

The Beginning Teacher Induction Program (BTIP) originated in 1993 because provincial education officials anticipated that before long there would be a significant influx of beginning teachers into the New Brunswick school system. Tom Hanley of the N B Department of Education and Dwain McLean of the N B Teachers Association were the prime collaborators in this project. They wanted to alleviate any possible negative impact of large numbers of inexperienced teachers suddenly entering the system. Their goals were to improve the teaching performance of new teachers, lower their attrition rate,and improve the system of collegial support within schools.

A provincial Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the Department of Education, the New Brunswick Teachers' Association, and the University of New Brunswick was established to determine how best to prepare for this development. The Committee implemented a pilot project in two districts in which beginning teachers were being hired and where there was enthusiastic support from the superintendents. The project began during the 1993-94 school year when 16 beginning teachers were paired with 16 mentor teachers in 10 schools. Funding was provided by the N.B. Department of Education. The following year the pilot continued in these same two districts; however, due to down-sizing there were significantly fewer beginning teachers; hence, the focus shifted from the needs of beginning teachers to the training of their mentors.

During the period from 1993-95, the Steering Committee, with representation from the pilot districts, continued to monitor the progress of the pilot projects and to gather and field test various teacher induction resources. A review of the literature on teacher induction, combined with the on-going experiences of the Committee, helped create a vision of what a "made-in-New Brunswick" teacher induction program might look like.

The program which evolved would have a provincial coordinator and one person designated as a BTIP contact person in each of the participating districts. The latter would facilitate the program locally, arrange for inservice sessions within the district, and be responsible for the allocation of funds. Principals would be responsible for identifying volunteer mentors within their schools as soon as staffing requirements could be determined. The Department of Education agreed to hold a two-day mentor training workshop prior to the start of school in August. Both the Department and the New Brunswick Teachers' Association agreed to support the program financially. The arbitrary target selected was $800

per mentor-beginning teacher pair, which is roughly equivalent to the cost of one day of release time per month for an 8-month period. The University of New Brunswick's contribution was to collect data on the BTIP and to prepare a report.

Based on the experiences of the pilot project, the Department agreed to purchase several resources for distribution to BTIP participants: A Handbook for Beginning Teachers, published by the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation (1993), and a professional text by Saphier and Gower (1987). In addition, they made available for loan, a set of video tapes on mentoring, which were developed by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (1994).

When, in the spring of 1995, it became apparent that a significant number of beginning teachers would be hired, the Committee made a hasty decision to offer an induction program to all 12 Anglophone school districts in the province. An individual was seconded from the public school system to coordinate the program for the Department of Education. In June, the new coordinator notified district officials of the program and requested they appoint a district contact person to coordinate the program in each participating district. In addition, the provincial coordinator informed superintendents that the Department of Education intended to hold a two-day workshop for mentors and district contact people in late August.

The Coordinator advised each district that the Department of Education would provide $500 in funding to support the professional needs of each beginning teacher-mentor pair. However, it was not until late October, when the New Brunswick Teachers' Association announced that it would provide an additional $300 grant to pairs who applied for it. Applicants were required to identify their goals, proposed activities, and how they intended to spend the money. The guidelines encouraged participants to buy release time for such professional activities as inservice, classroom observation, and M-BT discussions.

Data Collection

Four separate questionnaires were developed to gather data from the participants of the 1995-96 program: 156 beginning teachers (BT), 147 mentors (M), 96 principals of schools with BT-M pairs, and 12 district contact persons (DCP). Replies were received from all 12 district contact people, from 52 principals (54%), from 63 mentors (43%), and from 76 beginning teachers (49%). An analysis of the 203 returned questionnaires produced both qualitative and quantitative data which resulted in A Report on the 1995-96 Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick (Scott, 1996) available from the Department of Education in Fredericton.

The Selection of Mentors and Beginning Teachers

An analysis of the returned questionnaires indicated that 74% of the mentors were female, 40% taught at the elementary level, 38% taught at the middle/junior high level, and the remaining 22% taught at the senior high level. All of the mentors were 27 years of age or older, with 62% falling into the 27 - 45 age category. Their total years of teaching experience ranged from 4 to 35 years. The median years of teaching experience for the group was 18. As you would expect, the mentors taught a full range of grades and subjects.

The vast majority of the mentors reported that they were asked by their principal if they would act as a mentor for a beginning teacher. A few were approached by a vice-principal, department head, or district contact person. Two mentors indicated that they were actually asked to accept this responsibility by a beginning teacher.

The majority of the beginning teachers (74%) were also female; thirty-four (45%) were assigned to elementary schools; twenty-three (30%) were assigned to junior high/middle schools; seventeen (22%) to high schools. A significant proportion of them taught French Core, French Immersion, or kindergarten, apparently indicating higher levels of hiring in these categories.

Forty-seven per cent of the beginning teachers fell into the 21-26 age bracket; 51% were 27-45 years of age, and one teacher was over 45. A glance at the age profile begs the question, "Were they all beginning teachers?" The answer depends on whether one defines a beginning teacher as new to teaching or new to the district or school. If Odell's (1986) finding that both groups have similar needs is correct, then the question may be irrelevant. The data indicated that out of 76 beginning teachers, although 24 respondents were teaching for the first time, 57 had never taught previously on a full-time basis. Seventeen "beginning teachers" had taught on a full-time basis in other provinces or outside the public system. A glance at their previous experience indicated that 35 of the beginning teachers had been supply teaching or had held temporary/short-term teaching contracts.

Most of the beginning teachers reported that they were informed of their selection for the BTIP by their school administrators, although in 18 cases, the notice came from the district contact person or the district office. Mentors made the initial contact in two instances.

As might be expected, the majority of beginning teachers reported that they were not involved in the selection of their mentor. However, nine BT's indicated that they were either directly involved in the selection process or they felt they

were part of a negotiated process. Another 11 either had an opportunity to agree to the choice of mentor or felt they could have asked for a change if they had disagreed with the choice. One BT lamented that it was December before she finally got a teacher to agree to be her mentor.

Training and Professional Development Activities

The professional development activities associated with the BTIP can be thought of as occurring at three levels: level 1 -- provincially for the mentors and DCP's, with leadership from the Steering Committee; level 2 -- district-wide for mentors and beginning teachers, with leadership from the DCP; and level 3 -- at the school level for the beginning teachers, under the leadership of the mentors.

The Steering Committee hoped that a high percentage of the mentors and DCP's would attend the two days of mentor inservice held in Fredericton in August. The survey results revealed that while 3/4 of the district coordinators attended, only 1/4 of the mentors were present. In view of the rather poor attendance at level one, level two became, for many mentors, their only opportunity to learn the expectations of the BTIP and to receive training.

The mentors who missed the August workshop explained that school circumstances were responsible for their poor attendance - either they were not approached to be mentors until after the workshop, or their partners were not hired until later. It seems safe to speculate that since this was the first province-wide program, necessary information may also have been slow in reaching the administrators who would have been responsible for recruiting mentors for summer training.

All but three of the mentors who attended the August Mentor Training Workshop rated the planned activities as "very useful" or "satisfactory" and they recommended the continuation of provincial mentor training workshops. This quotation from a mentor was representative: "It gave me some idea of what activities to do and I felt more secure about what to expect.

Beginning teachers were not given the opportunity to participate in the provincial Mentor Training Workshop. The Selection Committee expected that district contact people who attended this workshop would subsequently organize appropriate workshops for mentors and beginning teachers at the district level. Since the DCP generally occupied supervisory positions, they were able to arrange for or provide inservice training within the district. However, when the survey data were analyzed, it appeared that unfortunately inservice training was not offered in all districts as expected. In fact, only six of the twelve participating

districts organized district-wide activities for their mentors and/or beginning teachers. Examples of the professional development activities which were reported from the district level included the following:

Orientation to the BT Induction Program
Workshop on lesson planning
Workshop on cooperative discipline
Workshop on Hunter's motivational factors in teaching
Skill training workshop for mentors only
Personality assessment workshop

All of these sessions were led by district contact people. Most were conducted in the Fall using funds provided by the Department of Education and the NBTA. This paid for supply teachers who provided release time for the half or full-day sessions attended, in most cases, by both mentors and beginning teachers. Both groups gave high ratings to the value of these activities.

The same funding was available for use at level three -- the individual school. This is where the largest proportion of the funds was spent and where most of the induction activity occurred. Even if mentors and beginning teachers had not had access to provincial or district inservice training, as long as they were paired, the data indicated that they initiated their own activities. In some districts, DCP's who had not been able to organize district-wide activities, intervened on an individual basis to provide ideas and encouragement.

The following list of level-three activities is arranged in order of descending frequency. It consists of activities initiated by the M-BT pairs in which the beginning teachers participated, often, but not always, with their mentors.

Meetings with mentors to discuss educational issues
Visits to others schools or classrooms for observation
Attend inservice/workshops/professional development sessions
Individual preparation or unit planning
Attend conferences not connected to the BTIP
Observe videos in "Mentoring the New Teacher" series (ASCD, 1994)
Meetings with a principal or DCP regarding the BTIP
Visits to model class or UNB Resource Centre
Discuss chapters in The Skillful Teacher (Saphier & Gower, 1987)
Have dinner with mentor or grade level teachers
Meet other beginning teachers and mentors
Preparation for parent-teacher interviews

Beginning teachers reported that the first two activities on the list occurred relatively often; the others less frequently; those near the end of the list occurred rarely. BTIP funds were regularly used for these activities [except dinner]. It was significant that the BT's rated all of the activities which they or their mentor initiated as either very useful or satisfactory. None was seen as useless.

While the previous list was based on open-ended activities generated by the beginning teachers, Table 1, which follows, examines the commitment of time to specific activities which the literature suggests are appropriate for teacher induction programs. This table attempts to quantify in comparative categories the amount of time beginning teachers committed to these activities.

Table 1 can be thought of as having two sections -- a section of informal activities comprising rows 1-8, and a more formalized section which includes rows 9-15. By examining the figures in the last two columns of section 1, one can see that beginning teachers most frequently engaged in activities which involved discussing education issues on an informal basis. Similar findings were reported by Huffman & Leak (1980). However, in section two the highest figures are to be found in columns 2 and 3 -- activities which were engaged in less frequently. The latter activities required mentors and beginning teachers to engage in such professional activities as observing one another teach and providing feedback [conferencing]. Such activities require a higher level of professional preparation than those in section one. The data imply that most pairs were unwilling to risk the emotional demands associated with these activities.

Row 11 is particularly interesting because it identifies the extent to which mentors observed the beginning teachers in their classrooms. Without classroom observation, the mentor can only learn indirectly what is occurring in the BT's classroom. Yet the data indicated that at least 38% of the BT's were never observed by their mentors.

The figures in rows 12 and 13 indicate that beginning teachers had relatively few opportunities to observe either other colleagues or their mentors teaching. It appears that teachers avoided being observed by fellow teachers. Although this should not come as a surprise, it represented a disappointment for those beginning teachers who valued classroom observation as a form of professional development. In fact, beginning teachers' top two choices for activities which they wished they could have engaged in more often were the activities in rows 12 and 13 [observe other colleagues teaching and observe mentor teaching]. Requests for feedback about teaching and opportunities to observe mentors demonstrating a lesson in the BT's classroom were the third and fourth choices.

TABLE 1

Relative Frequency of Beginning Teachers Participation
in Specific Professional Activities.
N=65

	FREQUENCY			
Professional Activities	0	1 - 5	6-10	>10
1. Make informal contacts with mentor at school	3	8	8	46
2. Discuss teaching ideas or strategies	2	18	15	30
3. Share or research teaching materials, books, etc.	7	22	11	25
4. Discuss curriculum or lesson planning	7	22	13	23
5. Discuss student assessment or reporting	8	19	15	21
6. Discuss classroom management techniques	4	23	17	19
7. Discuss administrative policies or procedures	9	26	14	15
8. Meet mentor socially out of school	21	31	6	7
9. Meet mentor in scheduled (formal) setting	10	47	3	5
10. Receive feedback about my teaching from mentor	17	32	10	4
11. Mentor observes me teach	29	29	5	2
12. Observe other colleagues teaching [not mentor]	26	29	3	5
13. Observe my mentor teaching in his/her own class	32	25	0	7
14. Team teach with Mentor	49	10	1	5
15. Observe mentor demonstrate lesson in my class	51	4	1	5

These findings raise the issue of just what activities one can reasonably expect of BT-M teacher pairs in an induction program. Furthermore, it is reminiscent of the levels of concern in the Concerns Based Adoption Model developed by Hall et Loucks (1987). In her review of the literature on mentoring, Kilcher (1991) identified 4 increasingly complex stages which pairs of teachers in induction programs appear to go through: orientation, initiation, consolidation, and collegial collaboration. The data in this study and those from an earlier study by Scott (1996) support Kilcher's postulation of stages in teacher induction programs. It appears that mentors and their partners will only participate willingly in induction activities with which they feel comfortable. Comfort levels and hence the kinds of activities attempted will vary from pair to pair depending on their experience, training, time together, and the motivation of the individuals involved.

Clearly, workshop facilitators and district coordinators need to explore the induction expectations and evolving needs of beginning teachers with participants at various times during the program. By raising consciousness of the implications of such developmental stages, program leaders can encourage pairs to progress at a pace which is both emotionally and professionally comfortable to both partners.

Perceived Problems with the Program

Mentors and beginning teachers indicated several conditions which caused problems for them. The condition which elicited the highest number of complaints was lack of time. Huffman & Leak (1986) found that finding adequate time for both formal and informal conversations between beginning teachers and mentors was a primary factor in addressing the needs of new teachers. Ganser (1996) also identified lack of time to meet as the greatest obstacle to mentoring.

Mentors were asked to estimate their involvement in the BTIP in minutes per week. Although calculations revealed that, on average, mentors committed about one hour per week to this program, many indicated that it was difficult to come up with a figure. One mentor suggested that she and her partner talked informally every day because their classrooms were adjacent; in addition, they held many long telephone conversations. Their situation reflected many others.

Time is always a precious commodity for all teachers. Although nothing can be done to increase the hours in the day, administrators can assist pairs by scheduling common noon hours and preparation periods. Such timetabling issues were addressed in the principals' questionnaire. Most principals indicated that, if

they knew far enough in advance, they could schedule for the mentor and beginning teacher to have a common preparation and lunch time. Of course, the participants did have the option of using their $800 allotment to purchase supply-teacher time. Although some was spent on professional resources and supply teachers for district workshops, most was committed to purchasing time for mentors and their partners to meet for the kinds of activities outlined in Table 1.

Unclear expectations for the BTIP received the second highest number of complaints. That this was a significant issue is a reminder that many mentors neither attended the provincial workshop nor were given appropriate inservice in their own districts. If a brochure on the BTIP which the Steering Committee intended to publish and circulate had been completed, it might have helped fill this information vacuum.

Two other problems which both mentors and beginning teachers identified, were a lack of proximity to partners' classrooms and assigning mentors to beginning teachers who had different subject or grade level assignments. Both of these problems are well documented in the teacher induction literature (Kilcher, 1991; Wilkin, 1992; Huffman & Leak, 1986) and in the previous study in this province by Scott, Smith, and Grobe (1995). While few situations are ever ideal, prior knowledge that such situations create problems for induction participants would enable proactive administrators to avoid some of these difficulties when they select mentors.

The investigator wanted to know if mentors and beginning teachers perceived age differences between them as problematic. From the mentors' perspective, the answer was an unequivocal "no"; all but two of the beginning teachers also shared this point of view. Another perspective is provided by Galvez-Hjornevik (1986) who cited research that indicated when the age gap was a full generation, mentors were more likely to display parental attitudes toward their beginning teachers.

Mentors and beginning teachers were also asked if it mattered whether they were paired with someone of the same or opposite sex. Although most of the mentors (81%) were paired with a beginning teacher of the same sex, all but two of the respondents felt they were well matched with their partners and their incompatibility problems were not related to gender. Galvez-Hjornevik (1986), however, claims that male-female mentoring relationships present special complexities which should be considered when establishing pairs.

Perceived Benefits of the Program

One of the most important aspects of a study of this nature is to determine

whether the participants believed that the program was personally beneficial. Both mentors and beginning teachers articulately described many benefits for themselves, their partners, and for their schools in general. Table 2 reflects the extent of the mentor's agreement with prepared benefit statements. The data clearly indicate that the mentors felt strongly that they had gained from the experience both personally and professionally.

TABLE 2
Mentors' perception of BTIP benefits
N= 63

Benefit Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree	No reply
Reflecting on my own teaching led me to new professional insights.	20	35	3	0	5
Close association with my BTIP partner meant I gained new teaching ideas.	14	31	8	1	5
I enjoyed my new relationship with my BTIP partner.	40	15	1	0	6
I was pleased by the opportunities and recognition associated with BTIP participation	17	24	7	4	8
Although it was time consuming, I found the overall experience helped me develop professionally.	20	32	3	1	5

It is interesting to note that positive teaching experiences in both the cognitive and the affective domain are felt to be significant by experienced teachers. Clearly, teachers value opportunities to grow professionally and to form meaningful personal relationships which have teaching as a central focus. This finding supports the thesis that teacher induction programs represent important staff development opportunities both for experienced and for beginning teachers. This conclusion is supported and discussed more fully in Ganser (1996), DeBolt (1992), Gordon (1991), and Evans (1989).

Several mentors commented on how the enthusiasm of their beginning teacher was an inspiration for them. One said, "(I) found the BT's enthusiasm contagious." Another claimed that she "bathed in her optimism." A third spoke of what she had learned from her partner and of the pleasure this role brought her: "I have learned a great deal from my co-teacher. She's young, enthusiastic, creative, gentle, nurturing. We have worked well together as a team and I truly enjoy being a mentor."

A number of mentors felt that the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching had been a benefit to them. Here is a representative comment: "[It] has made me re-visit my own planning/teaching techniques and examine reasons for my own successes and failures."

In addition to personal benefits, the mentors described their perception of the benefits of the program to their partners, the beginning teachers. A theme common to the mentors' comments suggested that the program contributed to increased confidence and to a faster learning curve for the new teachers. This quotation summed up many mentors' perceptions:

> [My] partner seemed to feel insecure at the beginning of the year, especially with the age level and curriculum. I feel he is more confident and he has said he's learned many "tricks of the trade" that would have taken a longer period of time to develop. For many strategies, he did not have to go through the trial and error stage.

The beginning teachers' comments also strongly emphasized how much they appreciated knowing that there was a designated person in their building who was readily available on a daily basis to help them in a variety of ways. These quotations were illustrative:

> My mentor answered all of my questions patiently, no matter how trivial, and this made my year so much easier.
> [It was] very supportive to know that a lot of people are concerned about first year teachers.
> [It] gave me lots of shortcuts and, therefore, I was able to concentrate on my teaching.

Both mentors and beginning teachers mentioned that they valued many specific benefits such as visiting partners' classrooms, opportunities to discuss professional ideas in a non-supervised environment, seeing teaching centres in action, sharing teaching materials, teamwork, communication, learning new/more teaching strategies, planning, camaraderie, and collegiality.

While many mentor-beginning teacher pairs experienced problems of one kind or another, for all but a very few, the overall experience of the BTIP was very positive. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that 97% of the mentors and 98% of the beginning teachers who responded to this question recommended the continuation of the program.

Principals made many positive and a few negative comments on the impact of the induction program on both beginning teachers and mentors. One observed that while participating in the BTIP the mentor became more conscientious, planned more carefully, and modelled exemplary lessons. Another felt the induction program had eliminated unnecessary stress for the BT, enhanced professional growth, provided security, and helped her become better prepared instructionally. While principals felt hard-pressed to identify direct benefits of the BTIP for students, they were quick to suggest that the quicker adjustment and greater confidence displayed by mentored teachers had an indirect effect on the quality of classroom learning.

A high proportion of principals acknowledged that the BTIP had reduced their workload because mentors assumed responsibility for the day-to-day support of the beginning teachers. One principal saw induction as a proactive measure; another, who was a first-year principal, expressed gratitude for the program as he questioned whether he would have found time even to answer the BT's questions. While they acknowledged their reduced involvement with beginning teachers, principals were nearly unanimous in affirming their continuing need to personally supervise these untenured teachers. From their perspective, participation in an induction program should not change traditional patterns of supervision.

Although the principals identified deficiencies similar to those noted by the

mentors and BT's, 73% concluded that the program in their school had been successful. Despite start-up problems, they felt the BTIP had great potential, with 86% expressing a desire for future involvement, and 90% recommending the continuation of the provincial program.

Conclusions

I concluded that, despite some start-up problems, participants in the Beginning Teacher Induction Program believed it was a very worthwhile program which had improved the quality of professional life for both beginning teachers and their more experienced mentors. Although it was hastily implemented and professional training was not available to all mentors, a high percentage of the participants valued the program and recommended it be continued. Furthermore, it appears that the three-tiered structure of the induction program envisioned by the Provincial Steering Committee is basically sound. However, details of the BTIP, its expectations, and its available resources need to be communicated more effectively and implemented with more fidelity in all districts.

If one considers that this was the first time this ambitious program had been attempted in 10 of the 12 school districts in the province, the degree to which the Beginning Teacher Induction Program in New Brunswick achieved its goal of providing professional support for new teachers is quite encouraging. Furthermore, this Program offers considerable promise, not only for the successful induction of new teachers, but also for encouraging collegial norms of professional development within the teaching profession. Each benefit is important; their combined effects are significant. The BTIP in New Brunswick has demonstrated that even hastily organized, low-budget induction programs can play a significant role in helping beginning teachers get their careers off to a better start.

Like the personal flotation devices worn by boaters, mentors keep new teachers from sinking when they are overwhelmed by the demands and responsibilities of first-year teaching. Unlike life jackets, PFD's will not hold a person's head out of the water. They require the active participation of the wearer. Similarly, the BTIP expects beginning teachers to actively work with their mentors to transfer and adapt the theory of university courses to the reality of the classroom. When teaching gets difficult, beginning teachers can take comfort in the knowledge that whatever problems lie ahead, they will not have to face them alone.

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